



CITY OF OSAWATOMIE

MUNICIPAL NEWSLETTER

JULY 2021 • ISSUE 3 • VOLUME 1

DEAR OSAWATOMIE,

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CITY MANAGER

My grandfather always reminded me that “the new ‘NEW’ is really very old.” What he wanted me to understand is that much of what we learn and do in life has already been done before. So, while it might seem or feel new -- don’t be fooled - - it’s likely very old.

Think about sustainability. Our grandparents were practicing sustainability more than 50 years ago and many of us practice it today. For some it's a backyard garden, or the carpool to get kids to dance class. For others it's the LED lightbulbs that reduce electric usage, or trips to a favorite second-hand clothing store. We all have the ability to lead sustainable lives, and many of us in the rural areas practice it every day. We simply have another name for it: self-reliant.

Then we have renewable energy, often considered a liberal concept. But in the western United States in the late 1800s, homesteaders and ranchers installed thousands of wind pumps and turbines to provide water and electricity.

What we are attempting to build in Osawatomie is a community that is self-reliant and resilient. Projects we are working on include:

- 5 MWh Solar Array on one of our Northland properties, allowing us to lessen our dependence on buying expensive electricity in the summer during peak demand.
- Applying for a Department of Energy (DoE) grant for Electric Vehicles and Electric Vehicle Charging Stations. The City owns the electric utility and, as electric cars become more affordable and prevalent, we have the capacity and ability to build one of the most robust EV communities in the KC Metro Region! We don’t have to wait on Evergy -- we can do it ourselves and become even more self-reliant.

So while sustainability and renewables might sound like the new “new,” it’s simply us living lives that are more self-reliant. Resiliency has been the history of life in Osawatomie since 1854 – which isn’t terribly new at all.



The 2021 Lights on the Lake parade was rescheduled due to incoming thunderstorms, and we ended up with one of the "coolest" parades in recent memory!

WHAT'S INSIDE

Urban Art Meets Rural Needs:
What We're Designing Next

An Introduction to the Oz
Commons Downtown
Redevelopment Planning Effort

Community Spotlight: The
Osawatomie Chamber of
Commerce

REMINDERS

City Newsletter We distribute a digital newsletter every Friday. Subscribe at osawatomioks.org/newsletter.

City Council Meetings are held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Agendas are available on our website and in the lobby of City Hall.

Summer Energy Tip Record-breaking heat waves are becoming the norm. Protect your family (and your pocketbook) by installing energy efficient fixtures, lighting, windows, and HVAC. Reduce your consumption and still stay cool!

URBAN ART MEETS RURAL NEEDS

"Rural matters because people choose to live and love here. Rural matters because even if it's the middle of nowhere, it actually might be the middle of it all."

The Kansas Office of Rural Prosperity, a division of the Kansas Department of Commerce overseen by Lieutenant Governor David Toland, advocates for and promotes rural Kansas and focuses on efforts designed to aid rural improvements. In 2021, one of those rural improvements included the debut of a pilot program for an art grant - the Rural Mural Project. Eleven rural communities applied for funding to design and implement a public mural in their community and Osawatomie was one of five finalists who were awarded funding! The planning process is just getting started, so stay tuned for more information on design, location, and artist(s).

Along with the rural mural project, City staff has been working with local steel fabricator Doherty Steel to design and construct an "Insta-worthy" artistic bike rack for our downtown district that proudly welcomes trail tourists to our community in a big, bold, and interactive way.

Be on the lookout for some beautiful new additions in the coming months!

CITY COUNCIL - QUARTERLY UPDATE

Wow! For a small community, we sure do have a LOT going on. Here are some highlights from the last three months of City Council meetings.

- Public Works Director Bill Roseberry presented the 2021 Street Inventory and denoted that planning for the total replacement of Brown Ave, from 7th - 12th and 16th - 18th, was the top street priority for 2021.
- Director of Community Development Ed Beaudry presented several properties for condemnation, furthering our efforts to clean up the community.
- The Governing Body voted to repeal the Mask Ordinance, meaning masks are no longer required in public spaces in Osawatomie.
- A joint meeting with the Osawatomie Board of Education was held to discuss issues pertinent to both parties, like utility connections, externships, and housing opportunities for educators and other staff.
- City staff was given approval to contract with Springboard Creative out of Mission, KS to redesign the City's logo and other branding elements, with the final product debuting mid-fall 2021.
- More funding options were secured for needed repairs and renovations to our wastewater treatment plant, and staff continues to work on funding opportunities for the water treatment and distribution network.
- Staff submitted inspection reports and preliminary renovation plans for Memorial Hall, which celebrates its 100th birthday this year, in the hopes of rededicating the building in 2022.
- City staff was given approval to investigate all manner of parking in Osawatomie, with primary focus being on 6th Street and in the 500 block of Main Street.
- The Committee of Landlords presented their final set of recommendations and plans for property maintenance and landlord relationships, and City staff has begun working on ordinances and regulations to reflect their recommendations.

If you're ever interested in knowing what's happening in your hometown, City Council meetings are a great place to start! Come see us every second and fourth Thursday of the month at Memorial Hall.

INTRODUCING



Project Overview

Participate in Osawatomie's most significant planning effort since the 1990s! The City has received a grant through the MARC Planning Sustainable Places (PSP) Program to further vibrant, connected, and green places. The PSP grant is part of the Creating Sustainable Places initiative and the region's long-range plan, Connected 2050 (<https://connectedkc.org/>).

The Oz Commons project will focus on Downtown, connecting key transportation corridors and trails while enhancing the community's identity and role in the region. We will enlist the help of key stakeholders and the community to create a guided redevelopment plan for the City and elected officials.

The project's outcomes include reconnecting the town to its past and the Flint Hills Trail State Park, building an active, sustainable, and renewable plan to create a more walkable community, and much more!

How Do I Get Involved?

Visit our project website www.osawatomieks.org/ozcommons to learn more, view the project schedule, and subscribe to project updates. An online community survey* is the first opportunity to provide your input and is available NOW at www.surveymonkey.com/r/ozcommons. Oz Commons is an exciting opportunity for the community to help shape Osawatomie's future. So help spread the word!

*Paper copies of the survey can be provided upon request if necessary.

PROJECT SCHEDULE - 2021

	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER
1 Existing Conditions Inventory	█				
2 Concept Exploration		█			
3 Concept Development			█		
4 Implementation Strategies			█	█	
5 Draft and Final Report				█	█
Community Engagement		*	*		*
* Public Meetings					
Online Survey July 6th - September 6th					



Learn more & help us plan for the future!

SPOTLIGHT | Osawatome Chamber of Commerce

Executive Director Kari Bradley gives us an inside peek at what projects she's working toward in 2022 and what she's most looking forward to within the City of Osawatome's next generation of economic development.



What's a typical day like for you?

Part of what I love about my job is that every day is different. I love getting to talk and meet with different people, whether that is in scheduled meetings, nonprofit organizations that I am a part of, or talking to visitors about the trail and where to eat, what to see, etc. It's sometimes hard for me to plan out my day because so many things pop up without notice. This is definitely a "roll with it" kind of job.

Is there a particular event you're excited to introduce, or re-introduce, to the community now that the pandemic has lessened?

I'm just excited for year two in my chair. My entire Chamber experience has been pandemic-laden. While some things are going back to the way they were, others are permanently altered. I'm excited for all of our events (new and old) and happy to have a full year of experience under my belt to help plan for them.

What sort of services do you offer business owners? How does this translate to benefitting the community-at-large?

I try to help businesses in any way that I can. I do a lot of promotional and marketing work, like event announcements and job openings along with helping promote specials or other opportunities. The other big portion of my job is working with the City of Osawatome and Miami County Economic Development to help give Osawatome businesses as many partners and advocates as I can. We're all in this together, we all want to see this town prosper, and I'm happy to be an advocate for not only business owners, but small-town economies and rural needs.

How can residents stay connected to all your activities?

I'm everywhere these days! I'd encourage everyone to sign up for our weekly newsletter and follow us on either Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter. But of course, anyone is welcome to call me or email me anytime. My door is open for pop ins (I'm right next door to the Utilities Office!) or visit our website at www.osawatomechamber.org.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS! THIS ISSUE IS SPONSORED BY

THE WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

is the nation's LARGEST residential energy efficiency program. The ECKAN Weatherization Program has been recognized as one of the best in the State of Kansas. The program is funded by federal Department of Energy (DOE) and Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) funds regulated by the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation.

Weatherization improves heating and cooling efficiency and energy savings by ensuring your home holds heat and air conditions while keeping hot and cold air out. At NO CHARGE to the client, income-eligible families receive a comprehensive home energy audit, which is an assessment of the entire home. Our certified energy auditor will search the entire home, inside and out, looking for inefficiencies and safety concerns using advanced equipment and techniques.

ECKAN serves low-income persons in Allen, Anderson, Bourbon, Chase, Coffey, Douglas, Franklin, Greenwood, Johnson, Lyon, Miami, Morris, Osage, Woodson and Wyandotte counties.

The energy audit will identify a customized account of areas for cost-effective improvements. The improvements will be provided FREE OF CHARGE by our network of professional crews and contractors. We assist elderly, handicapped and low-income families in 16 eastern counties.

Eligibility is based on household income relative to federal 2021 Income Guidelines (available at www.eckan.org/weatherization).

If your household has someone who receives one of these:

- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits
- Utility assistance from the Low Income Energy Association Program (LIEAP)

the household is automatically considered eligible for weatherization services.

